(b) if so, whether the NRI's would be asked to take up partnerships in the rural projects like micro finance initiatives;

(c) if so, the amount of investment that is expected to flow in and whether the agriculture and allied sectors would be benefited by such measures; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) to (d) The theme of PBD 2008 scheduled to the held in January, 2008 is "Engaging the Diaspora: The way forwar". The Conference will focus on the social development challenges facing India and the initiatives that overseas Indians can take in such diverse areas as health, education, empowerment of women and development in the States. The conference includes several sessions aimed at leveraging the resources, knowledge and philanthropic propensities of the overseas Indian community in rural development and related areas. A plenary session on Diaspora Philanthropy; Empowerment of Rural Women to discuss modes of participation and institutional support required for the Indian Diaspora to participate in philanthropic projects including micro finance initiatives, especially in the field of empowerment of rural women will be one of the highlights of the PBD. The conference is expected to promote partnerships and new initiatives by overseas Indians.

**NRIs in Dubai**

†1864. SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Non-Resident Indians living in Dubai (UAE) have been asked to leave the country till 30th September, 2007;

(b) if so, the number of such NRIs and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is also a fact that out of these NRIs approximately 700 migrants from Rajasthan have been put into jails and are being tortured there;

(d) if so, the steps taken for their repatriation and the details thereof; and

(e) the action being taken to stop the injust treatment being meted out with these Non-Resident Indians and the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The Non-Resident Indians living in Dubai have not been asked to leave the country. However, the Government of the UAE had announced a general amnesty scheme for three months beginning from June, 3 to September 2, 2007 which was later extended upto November 2, 2007 calling upon all those persons who were staying illegally in UAE either to leave the country or amend their residential status if they wished to continue work in the UAE. About 70,000 Indian expatriates who were staying illegally benefited from the amnesty and have either left the country or regularized their status with proper documents.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Question does not arise.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(e) Once Amnesty is declared the Indian Missions take up the matter with the local authorities for either regularizing the stay of the Indian workers or organize smooth issue of Emergency Certificates for their deportation to India. Further, the complaints of ill treatment, harassment, breach of contracts etc., received from the Indian workers are also taken up by the Mission with the sponsors/employers, Labour Department and local police authorities for appropriate action.

**Women harassed by spouses**

1865. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of complaints from women harassed by their spouses abroad have gone up since 2004;

(b) if so, the number of complaints received since 2004, year-wise; and

(c) the action that has been taken through Indian Mission abroad, diplomatic and political channels?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The number of complaints received in the Ministry in the last 3 years are us under:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 2005 | — | 19 |
| 2006 | — | 65 |
| 2007 (till October) | — | 116 |

(c) The Ministry has launched a scheme this year to provide legal and financial assistance to women deserted by their overseas Indian spouses. Under the Scheme, Missions based in countries having a large Indian Diaspora and comparatively more number of such complaints, have been authorized to empanel credible Indian Women's Organization/Indian Community Association/NGOs to provide legal assistance to such victims. Financial assistance up to a limit of US $ 1,000 per case can be released to these Indian Women's Organizations/Indian Community Associations/NGOs to meet initial cost and incidental charges for documentation and filling of the cases by them on behalf of the eligible victims.

**Indian labourers in foreign countries**

†1866. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the incidents of misbehaviour with Indian labourers working in foreign countries have substantially increased;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Indian labourers are forced to work at hazardous work places in difficult conditions with the connivance of touts and such cases are on the rise;

(c) if so, the action being taken by Government in this regard; and

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.